Message Text

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PAGE 01 HALIFA 00369 041002Z ACTION EUR-12

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CORRECTEDCOPYFORTEXT//PARTHREE//

E O 11652: N/A TAGS: PINT CA

SUBJECT: PREMIERS' CONFERENCE: ACADIANS WANT TO ATTEND

- 1. APPARENTLY MIFFED AT THE ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO PREMIER LEVESQUE'S PROPOSAL FOR RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS ON MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION RIGHTS, LEADERS OF NEW BRUNSWICK'S AND NOVA SCOTIA'S FRANCOPHONE ACADIANS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WANT TO BE CONSULTED BEFORE ANY COMMITMENTS TO QUEBEC ARE MADE. DENIS LOSIER, GENERAL-SECRETARY OF ACADIAN SOCIETY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, HAS INFORMED NB PREMIER HATFIELD THAT IT WILL BE "A GRAVE INSULT" IF FRANCOPHONE GROUPS IN CANADA OUTSIDE QUEBEC ARE NOT REPRESENTED AT FORTHCOMING PREMIERS' CONFERENCE AT ST. ANDREWS, NB, LATER THIS MONTH. LOSIER ALSO STATED THAT HE AND OTHERS MIGHT ATTEND CONFERENCE WHETHER INVITATIONS EXTENDED OR NOT.
- 2. REPORTING OFFICER SPOKE WITH LOSIER AND WITH
 HIS NOVA SCOTIA COUNTERPART, PAUL COMEAU, EXECUTIVE
 DIRECTOR OF NS FEDERATION OF ACADIANS. BOTH LOSIER
 AND COMEAU EMPHASIZED THAT LEVESQUE'S PROPOSED RECIPROCAL
 AGREEMENTS WOULD GUARANTEE FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION
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RIGHTS FOR "EMIGRE" QUEBECOIS OUTSIDE OF QUEBEC BUT WOULD NOT BENEFIT OTHER FRANCOPHONE GROUPS OUTSIDE QUEBEC. TO THE TWO ACADIAN LEADERS, IT SEEMED ANOMALOUS THAT CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO THE LANGUAGE RIGHTS OF QUEBECOIS OUTSIDE QUEBEC TO AN EXTENT NOT YET ACCORDED TO THE NATIVE FRANCOPHONE MINORITIES OF THE OTHER NINE PROVINCES. LOSIER SAID THAT HE MIGHT DECIDE TO GO TO ST.

ANDREWS EVEN IF AN INVITATION IS NOT GIVEN TO HIM IN ORDER TO GIVE AN INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS AND GET SOME PUBLICITY FOR THE ACADIAN CAUSE.

3. COMMENT: LOSIER AND COMEAU BELIEVE THAT NB AND NS CAN BOTH DO BETTER WITH REGARD TO EXTENDING FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLING TO THEIR ACADIAN MINORITIES. IN SPEAKING WITH ACADIAN LEADERS, HOWEVER, THE OBSERVER IS STRUCK BY THEIR APPARENT READINESS TO "WORK WITHIN THE SYSTEM" (AS THE TRENDY PHRASE GOES). THEY SEEM TO BE "PRO-FRANCOPHONE" ONLY INSOFAR AS THAT TERM TRANSLATES INTO "PRO-ACADIAN". IN NO SENSE (THUS FAR AT ANY RATE) DO THEY SEEM TO IDENTIFY WITH THEIR FELLOW FRANCOPHONES FROM QUEBEC. END COMMENT.

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